DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 461 829 CS 014 570

AUTHOR	Ediger, Marlow
TITLE	Summative Evaluation in Reading.
PUB DATE	2002-00-00
NOTE	8p.
PUB TYPE	Opinion Papers (120)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Academic Achievement; Elementary Secondary Education; Parent Teacher Cooperation; Portfolio Assessment; *Reading Achievement; *Reading Instruction; *State Programs; *Summative Evaluation
IDENTIFIERS	Mandated Tests

ABSTRACT

Summative evaluation of student achievement in reading emphasizes determining learner progress at the end of a unit of study, end of course, or end of the school year. Generally, state mandated tests stress an end of the school year percentile which is to indicate the present state of learner achievement. This paper discusses and analyzes summative evaluation. It first focuses on multiple ways of reporting learner progress in reading, such as parent/teacher conferences, telephone calls, fax messages, brief letters, a class newsletter, or a web site listing what is being studied in reading. The paper goes on to suggest that teachers should think of multiple ways of reporting student progress in reading to parents and the larger community. It then considers summative evaluation and state mandated tests. Finally, the paper considers portfolios and summative evaluation. (NKA)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 461 829

Summative Evaluation in Reading.

by Marlow Ediger

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

M. Ediger

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

CS 014 570

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SUMMATIVE EVALUATION IN READING

Summative evaluation of pupil achievement in reading emphasizes determining learner progress at the end of a unit of study, end of course, or end of the school year achievement. In contrast with summative evaluation, formative evaluation stresses evaluation along the way in ongoing lessons and units of study, prior to a stated end. Formative evaluation does not emphasize an end terminal point in assessment. It uses information to make needed changes along the way to assist learner achievement before the end of a designated time. Summative evaluation does stress some end, such as end of unit testing. Generally, state mandated tests stress an end of the school year percentile which is to indicate the present state of learner achievement. The balance of this paper will discuss and analyze summative evaluation.

Summative Evaluation and Multiple Ways of Reporting

Summative emphasizes to summarize what a pupil has learned. With the testing and measurement movement, teacher accountability is determined through pupil test results. Generally, a percentile is given for answering the question pertaining to how much a pupil has learned. To use a percentile to indicate pupil reading achievement at a given time sounds ludicrous and to some educators it is ridiculous. There is much more to pupil reading achievement than to report a test result with a percentile. The percentile omits completely what a pupil has achieved and can reveal in class. What has been taught and emphasized in class also needs to be noted carefully. Everyday, the pupil is evaluated by the teacher informally through teacher observation, checklists, rating scales, anecdotal statements, diary entries, and journal writing.

It appears to be important to use multiple means to assess and report learner progress in reading. To report pupil achievement, for example, the following methods also may be used:

1. parent/teacher conferences. Participants in the conference may share ideas on what would assist a pupil to do better in reading achievement. If the pupil is present at the conference, he/she may read aloud a selection to indicate oral proficiency in reading. It can be noted here, the kinds of reading errors by the learner. Weaknesses as well as strengths in word recognition and comprehension can be assessed. Written work

of the learner in the reading/writing connection may also be evaluated.

2. e-mail messages sent to the parent indicating progress of the learner at a specific point in reading. The message may be very precise in pinpointing achievement.

3. telephone calls to the home pertaining to what the pupil is truly attaining well in, in the reading curriculum. A brief discussion may follow.

4. fax messages are becoming increasingly common to communicate comments. Thus, if available to both the sender and to the receiver, fax messages may be sent to the pupil's home on achievements being made in reading by the involved learner.

5. a brief letter might be mailed to communicate reading progress of the learner.

6. a class newsletter may be sent home with the child to indicate what the class is emphasizing at the present time in ongoing lessons in reading. The newsletter is a means for the parent to use in comparing what the class is doing as compared to homework which the child has/is to complete.

7. a friendly "Tips for Parents" might be developed and sent to parents on how they can assist in teaching reading in the home setting. Parents may provide feedback on how their child is benefiting from the teaching tips conveyed.

8. a group of four to five sets of parents my be invited to come after school on a selected day to discuss reading problems and achievement of learners.

9. an invitation to parents and grandparents may be made to assist in the classroom, with tasks involving reading, such as listening to a set of children read orally and helping with word identification. Voluntary efforts and their results to help pupils achieve in reading should be shared with the teacher.

10. a web site listing what is being studied in reading and which assignments need to be completed by pupils, due date included (See Ediger, 1998, Chapter Fifteen) .

Teachers need to think of multiple ways of reporting pupil progress in reading to parents and the larger community. Newspaper articles and appearing on television by school personnel to report on pupil achievement are definite possibilities, especially in smaller cities. There are many small town newspapers which have columns on "News from the Classroom." TV stations in small city areas, too, are relatively easy to use in giving reports on what the school is doing. One local TV station has a "Community Forum," Sunday afternoon,

and invites people to appear on their program to tell about what they are doing and accomplishing. As a result, many teachers locally have appeared on "Community Forum." Formative evaluation stresses obtaining results from pupil achievement and using the feedback to improve instruction without any definite deadline or end in mind for reporting pupil progress in reading.

Summative Evaluation and State Mandated Tests

The use of state mandated tests certainly has stressed an end point in instruction and that being to report pupil achievement when the test was administered to learners. Test results generally are reported well from state mandated testing such as in

1. report cards whereby a district's or schools' test score averages are being compared with others in the media. A competitive approach is being emphasized here when comparisons are being made.
2. news media reports on failing schools whereby educational bankruptcy may be declared with a possible state takeover of these schools and school districts.
3. the need for vouchers and charter schools to take care of pupils who are not meeting state standards in achievement (Ediger, 1997, Chapter Eighteen).

A much better use of state mandated test results could accrue with evaluating what any learner missed and then emphasizing these as objectives of instruction, if deemed worthwhile. Too frequently, state mandated tests have weaknesses such as the following:

1. they lack validity in that the test covered what may not been taught in the classroom.
2. they lack reliability in that lack of consistency in results from a pupil is involved be it test/retest, alternative forms, and/or split half reliability.
3. they have not been pilot tested adequately to take out inherent weaknesses.
4. they usually have only one type of test item such as multiple choice. A variety of types should be used including essay tests. Essay tests provide pupils with opportunities to actually compose and write rather than responding passively to multiple choice test items.
5. they vary much in difficulty from one state to the next state when comparing pupil progress using the National

Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) test. The latter is given to a random sampling of students in the United States (See Bracey, 2000-2001 issues of Phi Delta Kappa).

State mandated tests need to assess weaknesses in their methods of assessment and attempt to overcome these deficiencies. Testing procedures can be used wisely in teaching and learning situations when the results are used by the teacher to overcome and remediate difficulties. They are not used well when teachers feel pressure to spend weeks of time to prepare pupils for taking these tests. Spending much, much time on readiness for test taking robs pupils of valuable instructional time. Then too, if selected academic areas are not included in state mandated testing, they may lose their importance in the curriculum.

There are a plethora of materials to purchase within a state to help the teacher prepare pupils for test taking. There also are sources of information without cost which may assist teachers to obtain better test scores from pupils. The following article entitled "Teachers Use Web Site to Prepare Students for State Tests," contained the following content (Kirksville Daily Express, January 3, 2002):

Teachers from more than a dozen school districts have formed a Web site to help other teachers prepare their students for high stakes state tests.

The Web site includes sample tests to measure how students will fare on the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) tests. It was designed by Kansas City area school districts, but any teacher in the state can use it.

The state judges school districts by their MAP results, so educators are feeling a healthy pressure"...

Teachers are struggling to align curriculum to the test and to measure how students and teachers are doing -- particularly in grade levels preceding those that take MAP tests.

Portfolios and Summative Evaluation

Portfolios may be used in summative evaluation procedures if they are designated as end of term or end of year device to show pupil achievement. The pupil with teacher assistance needs to be heavily involved in portfolio development. A representative sampling of pupil products nd processes should be inherent in the portfolio. One item to watch is that the portfolio does not become too voluminous due to several professionals making an evaluation of each. Thus, the volume

should be manageable for evaluators to make appropriate judgments as to its worth and quality. Which kinds of items may be included in a pupil portfolio?

1. written work including outlines, poems, plays, essays, narrative accounts, summaries, and reports.
2. cassette recordings of oral reading, and talks/speeches given in classroom assignments.
3. a video tape of the pupil working within a committee.
4. snapshots of art projects; construction experiences; murals, dioramas, and creative dramatics activities, as they relate to ongoing lessons and units of study.
5. a self evaluation paper by the pupil in terms of carefully developed criteria.

The portfolio emphasizes entries pertaining to everyday experiences of the pupil. It is possible to notice improvement in achievement when observing, for example, one written report with another completed at a later time. Parents, too, will wish to see their child's achievement from day to day products and processes in the portfolio. A portfolio may provide very comprehensive results of a pupil's achievement. Thus, the breadth of contents may well provide observers with a good overview of what has been learned. Portfolio results may not have a single percentile to show their quality, but they do give evidence of specific school work performed and completed by a pupil.

Portfolio methods of appraising pupil achievement are learner centered. However, the time needed to assess the final portfolio for each pupil may be great. These cannot be machine scored as is true of state mandated tests. Then to, there is a problem of reliability when two or three raters assess a portfolio in that there may be a lack of agreement on the rating to be given. Thus, interscorer/interater reliability becomes a problem. There is more subjectivity in portfolio evaluation as compared to assessing state mandated tests. The latter uses a scoring key which is the same for every grade level test within a state. Unless there are computer glitches in scoring, mass numbers of tests may be scored very quickly and accurately (Ediger, 2000, 38-44).

References

Bracey, Gerald (2000-2001 issues of the Phi Delta Kappan). Bloomington, Indiana: Phi Delta Kappa.

The Daily Express, "Teachers Use Web Site to Prepare Students for State Tests," Kirksville, Missouri, January 3, 2002, 8.

Ediger, Marlow (2000), "Portfolios: Will They Endure?" College Student Journal, 34 (1), 38-44.

Ediger, Marlow (1998), Teaching Reading Successfully in the Elementary School. Kirksville, Missouri: Simpson Publishing Company, Chapter Fifteen.

Ediger, Marlow (1997), Teaching Reading and the Language Arts. Kirksville, Missouri: Simpson Publishing Company, Chapter 18.